

Remarks

Claims 1-29 and 32-95 remain in this application. Claims 30 and 31 have been canceled. Claims 53-95 have been withdrawn as the result of an earlier restriction requirement.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the pattern of non-adhesive material forms provides a path for air egress to an end edge. Support for the amendment is found on page 8, paragraph 35 of the specification. ✓

Applicant has submitted herewith the declaration of Mr. Michael Hannington, the inventor of the subject matter of this application. In his declaration, Mr. Hannington explains how the pattern of non-adhesive forms of the claimed adhesive article provide a path for air egress for air trapped between the adhesive layer and the surface to which the adhesive article is adhered. ✓

Specifically, Mr. Hannington has explained that even with modest application of pressure, the combination of geometric contact area of the adhesive and the viscoelastic properties of the adhesive allows the adhesive to debond readily under the pattern of non-adhesive material forms, e.g., the path of weakness, to form a path of air egress at the adhesive/substrate interface. MS

Additionally, Mr. Hannington has responded to the Examiner's comments set forth in the Office Action January 23, 2003 with regard to the characterization of the adhesive as being limited to a "not fully cured" pressure sensitive adhesive. Specifically, Mr. Hannington has explained that pressure sensitive adhesives are generally fully cured at the time of application. Furthermore, the adhesives used in the invention are deformed when the non-adhesive material forms are embedded into the adhesive layer and that the non-adhesive material forms help to sustain the deformation. wo ✓

The reference cited by the Examiner to explain adhesive behavior (Polymer Interface and Adhesion, S. Wu, p. 359) appears to be applicable to liquid adhesives that must undergo a curing step at the time of application, rather than pressure sensitive adhesives that require no curing at the time of application. no ✓

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, request is made for timely issuance of a notice of allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR 1.8a)

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any paper or thing referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date: July 23, 2003

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